

**SUCCESS SUTRAS FOR THE 21ST CENTURY : A TRILOGY OF WISDOM**

- ☒ **Chanakya's Political Wisdom**
- ☐ **Confucius' Social Wisdom**
- ☐ **Kabir's Spiritual Wisdom**

Presenting

**Chanakya's**

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**Political**

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**Wisdom**

**WISDOM GURU PAVAN CHOUDARY**

*Author of the world acclaimed book -  
When You Are Sinking Become a Submarine*

# **Pavan Choudary**

## **A Brief Introduction**

**Pavan Choudary** is the author of path breaking books like *How a Good Person can Really Win, Broom & Groom* (co-author Kiran Bedi), *A Trilogy of Wisdom* (on Chanakya, Confucius and kabir), *Machiavelli for Moral People*, *Uprising 2011: Indians against Corruption* (co-author Kiran Bedi), *When you are Sinking become a Submarine* and *The Rx Factor*. Pavan is also the Managing Director of Vygon, a leading French Multinational, chairs the Medical Equipment Division of CII, hosts the TV program *Hum Aise Kyun Hain* on Doordarshan, and has written columns for The Times of India and Financial Chronicle. He sits on some of the most respected advisory boards of India and is a much sought after Management Strategist. To know more visit [www.pavanchoudary.in](http://www.pavanchoudary.in) or follow him on twitter @AuthorPavan.

## **Other Books by Pavan Choudary**

1. How a Good Person can Really Win
2. Confucius' Social Wisdom
3. Kabir's Spiritual Wisdom
4. Machiavelli for Moral People
5. When you are Sinking Become a Submarine
6. The Rx Factor: Strategic Creativity in Pharmaceutical Marketing
7. Broom & Groom (on Hygiene and Manners) co-authored with Kiran Bedi
8. Uprising 2011- Indians Against Corruption co-authored with Kiran Bedi

## **Praise for the Author and his Books**

### **A Trilogy of Wisdom (on Chanakya, Confucius and Kabir)**

*Each book in this collection of mini books has great depth...there is great insight on political sharpness, social gain and spiritual intelligence - to aid the ambitious soul.*

**- Hindustan Times**

*This book has been able to capture the spirit of Confucianism. It is most appropriate that it dwells on the social aspect of Confucianism. It talks of Social Harmony, which is key to Confucius.*

**- Mr. Xei Fei (Cultural Head, Chinese Embassy)**

### **How a Good Person can Really Win**

*This book is for real people in the real world with insights, practical wisdom and a fresh perspective for everyone...the alternative of course, is to read up hundreds of books over tens of years!*

**- Carolyn Marcille (Barnes & Noble, New York, USA)**

*Pavan Choudary's passion for dwelling deep into the questions one feels remain unanswered, has ensured him a place amongst the foremost thinkers of the world.*

**- The Times of India**

*An invaluable, timeless treasure. Pavan is a megamind taking Indian thinking to refreshing new heights in the global arena. His works should be made compulsory reading for leaders, teachers and parents.*

**- Dr. Kiran Bedi**

### **The Rx Factor**

*Kip Piper, Senior health Advisor to the White House Office, USA, has included The Rx Factor in his list of Top 10 books on Pharmaceutical Marketing. To view the list you may visit amazon.com at <http://www.amazon.com/Pharmaceutical-Marketing-Bookshelf-Recommended-Piper/lm/2RUHJCQM7ERX0>*

*I strongly recommend this book for all pharmacy students and marketing professionals...it gives a creative landscape for Pharmaceutical marketing filled with innovative and practical marketing strategies.*

**- Dr. B. Suresh, President, Pharmacy Council of India**

### **Broom & Groom co-author Kiran Bedi**

*Broom & Groom by proud Indians Kiran Bedi and Pavan Choudary is a collector's item. A must on every book shelf.*

**- Deccan Chronicle**

*Indians and civic sense don't often go together. That may change if our worthy countrymen take broom & groom to heart.*

**-The Telegraph**

*It addresses separate categories- students, government officials, and so on and the illustrations help make it a useful handbook for people who badly need it.*

**-The Times of India**

### **Machiavelli for Moral People**

*Want to read a politician like a book...read Machiavelli for Moral People.*

**- The Tribune**

## INTRODUCTION

To peep into the megamind of Chanakya will be easier if we understand these two traits about him - One: Chanakya loves his motherland passionately and intensely. He doesn't want his motherland to be enslaved at any cost. He spends sleepless nights when he learns the news that the Greeks are advancing towards Magadha. He gives up his career as a Professor at the Takshila University with the hope of advising the Nanda dynasty as to how to stave-off the impending attack and preserve independence. He is often deeply frustrated when the rulers of the populace behave imprudently. His frustration is the yard-stick to measure his love for the country. Two: Chanakya detests the hypocrisy of the Indian society because he knows that it makes India weak and non-credible. Chanakya himself sees life as it is and has the courage to talk about it like that. He is not sugarcoat. He is sandpaper.

Chanakya is a peak in political consciousness, a peak in political thought. But he is not just a thinker he is a doer. Karl Marx has said *philosophers have only interpreted the world- the point however is to change it*. Herbert Spencer has said *the great point of education is not knowledge but action*. Chanakya is a man of action. Chanakya brought together several quarreling and splintered states under one umbrella. He created for the first time in recorded history a strong India, a proud India, an India which for a change was proud of its present and of its present strengths, an India which was ready to repel successfully, the never beaten armies of even Alexander.

Chanakya is as ruthless as Machiavelli - still there is a moral strand in him. This morality is his second distinguishing factor. He is a votary of guile with the wicked but he feels enduring strength comes from principles. He has stated that a debt should be paid of till the last penny and an enemy should be destroyed without a trace. In the first part of the statement you sense Chanakya's morality in the second part of the statement you feel

Chanakya's ruthlessness. Chanakya's positivism is immense. He is so positive that his positivism also accommodates the negative in it. This positivism is the other distinguishing trait of Chanakya.

## Political Wisdom of Chanakya

*An impolite servant upsets his master's mind every now and then.*

In this verse the term *servant* means the subordinate and *master* means the superior. Chanakya is a great one for discipline and he goes to great lengths to ensure the right chain of command. Like Nietzsche, Chanakya does not believe in equality of men. He feels that to impose equality on a human race which is so unequal would be the biggest injustice. Very few people have in the history of mankind spoken against equality. Why? Because the egalitarian argument is a humanitarian argument, when you speak against equality then you seem as inhuman. But Chanakya differs from the world he does not go with the trend he goes with the truth. So he feels that for any organization to function, there is need for authority. You need an umpire for the game to be played. Similarly, Chanakya feels you need authority for an organization to function.

I am reminded of the movie “The God Father”. In God Father the Corleone family is having a meeting with a rival family and the rival family is going to propose to them the prospect of entering into the drugs trade. The Corleone family is headed by Don Corleone. His sons, Sonny and Michael, are with him at the meeting. The Corleone family decides among themselves that they will decline this offer as they don't wish to get into the drugs trade. At the meeting the offer is made by the rival family and Sonny Corleone cannot resist the temptation of telling the group that he is interested in the deal, however, he finally defers to Don Corleone, the God Father, and does not push his point. The



rival family smells a rat. They understand there is a rift in the Corleone family and this knowledge makes them attack the Corleone family and engage them in a very bloody war which costs the Corleone family dearly.

Certainly enough, an impolite servant upsets his master's mind every now and then. Not only does he upset his master's mind every now and then, he also weakens the enterprise as cited in the case above. Secondly, by upsetting his master's mind he does not allow the master to function peacefully. He does not allow the master to play his best game. Such servants also lose out because the master doesn't want them to accompany him to public gatherings or where he is meeting other people. This reduces any chance of social interaction. In this way, these subordinates miss many an opportunity. They don't even know that those opportunities existed. Their master decides not to take them along because the master feels that the servant will dilute his authority or he will not be able to operate with ease because of his servant's insubordinate attitude.

*Even a priest needs to inspire some awe  
to command the faith of the faithful.*

By priest, Chanakya means a virtuous man - a kind, honest, sincere, generous, loving man. If you wish to live like such a man your life would be saintly. If you wish to be like a saint, then Chanakya says you should have a weapon. What does he mean by a weapon? Weapon means either the ability to stand for your principles or your network of contacts and your good will or your ability to expose the other person's misdeeds. This will inspire awe. So Chanakya is trying to tell the student that even the most virtuous man needs some power, some awe to command the faithful. A western author has said that, "so that it may have a little peace even the most gentlemanly of dogs need to snarl occasionally." Chanakya conveyed this very thought through his writings 2500 years ago.

*One whose anger does not inspire awe  
and whose pleasure gives no rewards  
will be of no consequence.*

Here Chanakya is speaking about how authority is linked to sanctions or to rewards. He is trying to tell the ruler that if you are angry and do not impose sanctions and do not punish, and if you are most pleased and cannot give rewards you will be of no consequence. Post Indo-China war, China encroached thousands of kilometers of our territory. Even post this encroachment, our Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru said that, “We forgive China for this transgression”(sic).

Next day Ram Dhari Singh Dinkar, a Hindi poet had this to say,

***Shama Shobti Us Bhujang Ko, Jiske Pas Garal Ho  
Vo Shama Kya Kare, Jo Dantheen, Vishheen or Saral Ho***

*A serpent that has venom, has teeth and has strength - when it forgives, there is grace in its forgiving, there is magnanimity. But when a serpent that has no venom and no bite claims to forgive, it sounds like hypocrisy (hiding its defeat with noble words). It means nothing and fools no one.*

In other words, Dinkar was trying to tell the leadership of the country that you can only forgive when you are strong. It is in this vein that Chanakya is saying that your anger and conversely, your forgiveness are graceful only when you have strength. If you do not have strength and you get angry you might be

vanquished for your bravado. Also if you have no strength and you say that you are forgiving some body who is more powerful than you, the world will laugh at you.

*A man should not make a place his home where -  
there are no prosperous people (that is no commerce to offer opportunity),  
no soldiers, scholars, a king, river and physicians.*

Here Chanakya speaks about those factors which make a nation stable. He throws light on those traits which are necessary to allow prosperity and smooth conduct of life in a state. First, he says a man should not make a place his home where there are no prosperous people that is there is no opportunity for commerce to flower.

Why does he say this?

Chanakya understands the importance of wealth. In fact he has said that only a rich man lives. What does he mean by this? He feels that only a rich man is respected, is attended to, is listened to, can experience the pleasures of life and can help those whom he loves. So Chanakya is very aware about the importance of wealth. He knows that wealth will not buy everything but he also knows that whenever it cannot buy something it buys a substitute for that. For example wealth cannot buy love but it can buy you attention- you go to a five star hotel you will get all the attention you require. Wealth can not buy you health but it can buy you good healthcare -you can go to the best hospitals and get yourself treated. So wealth is important and Chanakya understands this importance and he frankly states it; that one of the important things you should ascertain before you make a place your home is whether there is opportunity which leads to the flowering of Commerce.

Second thing to ascertain before making a place your home is - Soldiers. Why Soldiers? Because money needs guarding. Chanakya understands that once you have money you should have the ability, the strength to protect that money otherwise dacoits will come. He also understands that whenever there has been a fight between the treasure and the tank, the tank has won. He also understands that often when nations are negotiating trade treaties with other nations in their board rooms and their interests are at cross purposes, these boardroom battles often spill over to battle grounds. That means when a mighty nation cannot give the other nation economic justice then often it steps from the board room into the battle ground and moves aggressively towards it. When a powerful nation can't be fair it tries to overpower the other nation. He understands this. So he says there should be soldiers and he is so correct in wishing for a strong army or good soldiers.

Even today you find that there are five nations in the Security Council of the United Nations. They all have one thing in common - they all have Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles. (Intercontinental ballistic missiles are missiles which fire from between 6000 to 12000 km range.)

Recently Mr. Henry Kissinger was in India and I had the opportunity of asking him that the riches of the world are coming to India but the weapons are still in the West; what will happen? He said it will be a time of tension. He said this is the first time it will be happening so it will be a time of tension and it will require a lot of resilience to preserve the wealth of the country. What is it that he was referring to? His implication was that when this imbalance happens, when the

East starts becoming wealthy and the weapons are still in the West, then first the militarily powerful nations will try to stop this flow of wealth to the less powerful nations. And how will they do so? By changing the rules of commerce. *The rules of the world favour the mighty because the mighty make the rules.* So they will begin by changing the rules. They will change the rules or propose changes in the rules of globalization etc., so that they start favoring them again or start favoring them disproportionately. It is then that the less powerful nations like us will protest and that protest is good. There will be some friction and remember all polishing comes through friction. So that friction is good. However whether we will be listened to or not is the important point. Who will be listened to? In the final analysis (**and I say this only on the basis of history so far**), those nations who have Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles (or fire power to defend themselves) will be listened to - those are the nations which will get justice.

Why? Because an intercontinental ballistic missile is a deterrent force.

Militarily - Army, Navy and Air Force wise, India cannot match up to the most powerful nations. They have far more fire power than us. Intercontinental ballistic missile is the slingshot which tells them that *if you step from the boardroom into the battle ground and try to march towards us with sinister intentions, then we have this slingshot which can take your eye.* This deep understanding of human nature is making Chanakya say how important is the presence of soldiers and a strong defense for a normal and healthy state.

The third necessary requisite in a place before you make it your home is the presence of scholarly Brahmins or wise people. *Wisdom means the ability to see the true nature of things and then make choices which are true, right and lasting. It is to be informed by the sum of learning through the ages using multiple forms of intelligence reason, instinct, intuition, heart and spirit.* Wisdom balances self interest with public good. *True wisdom is grounded in past experience or history and yet it is able to anticipate the likely consequences in future.* This is the kind of people he is looking for who can guide the society towards the right direction, who have learned from the past and can foresee the future because of their highly developed senses.

The fourth requirement for a place to qualify as a good home is a good king. We need a good ruler; who maintains law and order and is able to protect the country; who is wise and courageous and who engages in state craft. Chanakya knew the importance of a good king because he had noticed that our kings have often been the people who betrayed the nation or public. Sometimes they betrayed the public because they wished to cheat it but more often they betrayed because they were unwise, because they were naive. In the recent past, if we were to look at our kings (leaders), many of them forgot that the most important duty of a king is to protect the country, engage in state craft and protect its people.

When *Babar* came to India, he came with eight thousand soldiers and camped outside *Rana Sanga's* Kingdom. *Rana Sanga* had a hundred thousand soldiers. *Rana Sanga* called his astrologer one day before the battle and asked him what



will happen in the battle? The astrologer said, “You will be victorious Sir”. *Rana Sanga* sent this message to *Babar*. *Babar* replied, “I would like to meet the astrologer personally. Can you send him over?” *Rana Sanga* sent his astrologer to *Babar's* camp. *Babar* asked him, “What will happen in the war tomorrow?” The astrologer said, “You will lose, Sir”. *Babar* took out his sword and beheaded the astrologer, and pointing to the astrologer's dead body told his eight thousand soldiers, “A man who cannot tell his own future, how can he tell my future? Let us finish them”. And this army of eight thousand people defeated our army of a hundred thousand people. Another reason why *Babar* won was that *Babar* understood that the Indian mind is a mind that has not been able to distinguish the eternal truths in a scripture from the temporal sayings. The eternal recommendation in the *Geeta* says that once in a while, when it is required, the good should stand up and snuff out the bad. In other words, you should resist evil and also be prepared to take arms to annihilate it when required. This is an eternal truth. The *Geeta* also says that the cow should be worshipped as a Goddess. This recommendation is temporal. It must have arisen from the socio-economic importance of cows in the period when the *Geeta* was written - so it should have expired when its utility was up. *Babar* understood that the temporal sayings which should have been discarded are also continuing as eternal truths. The Mughals invaded India as they knew that Hindus are still stuck up with the temporal recommendations of their scriptures. So they led the charge of their armies with herds of cows. They tied calves to the foreheads of their charging elephants. And the Hindu archers laid down their bows and arrows! The Mughals converted the battle grounds in to cattle grounds and

laughed their way to victory. Somewhere Chanakya knew that even our kings were naive. It is not that our kings could not convince our people to give up superstitions and rituals. They themselves were superstitious and believed in hocus pocus. Here Chanakya tells us the importance of a good wise king who is discerning and discriminating.

The next requirement he mentions for a good home is a river, because a river would give you water which is life sustaining and also good harvests which keep you self sufficient in food.

Lastly, Chanakya talks about physicians. Physicians promise you good health. Physicians ensure that any outbreaks are controlled. Physicians ensure that the population stays healthy and strong and that is why Chanakya highlights the importance of physicians.

*The public follows the king.  
If the king (government) is good, the public will be / become good.*

The meaning of this verse follows from an understanding of how Chanakya defines a king's duty. Chanakya defines the king's duty as ensuring the welfare of his people. Chanakya felt that war should not be waged to destroy other nations nor should war be waged to settle previous grievances. War, when resorted to, should be a means to improve the state of your people. Chanakya also knew that whenever there is an incompetent and dishonest Government it blames the public. It says for e.g. that *a public gets the government it deserves*. How right he proved in times to come. When Britain conquered so many countries of the world, in every country whenever there were protests against their mis-rule the British rulers said *a public gets the government it deserves*, thus washing their hands from the responsibility of being a good government. Such rationalizations allowed them to juice all these countries and send their wealth to Britain. About three hundred years back, more than fifty percent of the total share of world trade was coming from India and China and by the time the British left India this share had come to around two percent for India. David Steingart, a noted economist has recently come out with a book, *War for Wealth*, which explains how the British held India in coma for more than two hundred years so that they could drain its wealth. So all this wealth was sucked away by Britain and all the time we, like other colonies were told, that a public gets only the government it deserves. But this was not the British Government's rhetoric in Britain. In Britain it behaved very responsibly and led the public to great

heights by setting a good agenda and creating opportunities for the people. The British Government even gave its convicts, its prisoners, its criminals a chance in Australia. It sent them there and gave them an opportunity to establish an empire. It also helped these convicts en-cash opportunity in Australia. So elsewhere it was saying that the public sets the agenda but, in Britain, it was responsibly setting the agenda and the direction.

Unfortunately post independence when our politicians took over the reins of the nation they kept on repeating the dialogue they had learnt from the British, “A public gets the Government it deserves,” and went on sucking the country. They were so naive that they didn't even realize that the script writer of this dialogue was a foreign invader and post independence it was the sons of the soil who were ruling the country.

Chanakya is close to the truth when he says, “The king will and should set the agenda”. The public follows the king's lead. The King is the game setter. He carves the destiny of the nation. It is his responsibility that good governance prevails, that there is opportunity for all to engage in productive activities, that the nation's interest is protected in the international comity of nations and the nation stays strong to handle all external and internal threats. These are the responsibilities he bears and there is no running away from them.